Setting up of village resource centres in Andhra Pradesh

*193. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of PANCHAYATI RAJ be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to set up village resource centres to provide better services;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) by when, these are likely to be set up;

(d) whether the locations of the proposed centres have been identified; and

(e) if so, the details thereof pertaining to the State of Andhra Pradesh?

THE MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) and (b) The Village Resource Centre (VRC) programme was initiated by the Department of Space about a year ago. It aims at delivering a variety of space technology-enabled products and services directly to the grassroots through these centres, as single-window delivery mechanisms, for services such as tele-medicine, tele-education, information on natural resources and weather, inter-active advisories on agriculture, fisheries etc.

(c) and (d) Two clusters of VRCs—one in Tamil Nadu with four centres and the other comprising nine centres in Kerala and Tamil Nadu-have already been set up and are operational. The Department of Space is in the process of setting up six more VRCs in Kerala and 34 VRCs in Karnataka. In addition, eight VRCs located in Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Orissa, Rajasthan and Tamil Nadu will form part of a cluster proposed to be inaugurated in January, 2006.

(e) Two VRCs—one at Moosapet, Hyderabad and the other at ICRISAT, Hyderabad—are planned to be set up in Andhra Pradesh.